

20 June 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT: COSATI Meeting, 14 June 1966

1. Melvin S. Day, the NASA representative, was congratulated on his new title of Deputy Assistant Administrator for Technology Utilization. This brings him into the immediate official family of Mr. Webb, the Administrator, and amounts to a very big step up.
 2. Bill Knox announced that he is leaving in about a week to attend a meeting of the Ad Hoc National Information Policies Committee of OECD. The discussion will include U.S. policy on the distribution of U.S. documents in Europe. This subject will be introduced by the OECD secretariat. John Sherrod attended a recent meeting in Europe on release of atomic energy information. These two meetings reflect a change in U.S. policy that will doubtless be spelled out at the next COSATI meeting.
 3. There will be an EDUCOM summer study session at Boulder, Colorado. The first week and a half will be devoted to subject handling and computer data processing, with much of the push provided by Bob Hayes. The next two weeks will discuss policies regarding information handling. The final week will summarize findings and suggest directions. John Lorenz will probably be at the final sessions. Bill Knox feels that it is best that there be no official COSATI participation. Participants should feel completely free to speak their minds and they will almost certainly suggest large-scale Federal financing. Any COSATI members who do go, however informally, are asked to send a brief note on the meeting to Andy Aines.
 4. The Chairman reported that some members and observers are failing to keep their departments and agencies fully informed regarding COSATI meetings. HEW has a committee for the express purpose of guaranteeing good communication.
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6. The National System Task Force met with SDC Friday, 10 June 1966. They are getting ready to tackle system design. They will probably include proposals on support to abstracting services. Further tasks, namely studies of data handling systems and informal communications, are in the talking stage. Contractors should be selected soon.

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7. Simon Pasternack has an article in the May 1966 issue of Physics Today, asking "Is journal publication obsolescent?"

8. Bill Knox, Andy Aines, and Curt Fritz are preparing a briefing for the Bureau of the Budget, with special emphasis on national systems handling. They expect to be asked for a similar presentation for PSAC, emphasizing support to scientists rather than to the engineering community.

9. The FLC met on May 25 with the Committee on National Library Information Systems (CONLIS). Gordon Williams, Chairman of CONLIS, pointed out that the interests of the seven library associations include, but are not limited to, scientific and technical materials. CONLIS is expected to make a formal response to the COSATI proposal for a national system.

10. Ruth Davis feels that the three reports issued thus far by the Information Sciences Technology Panel pretty well cover management and resources considerations. Two other reports are now in final editing, one dealing with the dissemination of machineable text and the other summarizing the February discussion with consultants concerned with scientific aspects of information handling. Work waiting for Panel attention includes input problems, especially automated input. Another major problem about which relatively little is known is the control of information within a system. In manipulating stored data, one hopes to lose as little as possible of the content and, at the same time, one should avoid bestowing a false authoritativeness and importance simply because facts have passed through an impressive system. If the Panel can settle on a few definable problem areas, she hopes to assign small groups of perhaps 3 or 4 people to dig into each one and suggest a solution or at least a line of attack.

11. She estimates that the list of projects is probably 300 short of the actual total. Approximately one-half of the 1300 listed are adequately described. Each of the other projects should be described on a one-page form. She is inclined to "force feed" this information rather than passively wait for requests. Walter Carlson was quite shocked at the lack of reaction around the table. He felt that COSATI members were tacitly endorsing a proposal that would flood them with paper before they had stopped to consider what purpose might be served. Ruth Davis pointed out that the flood of paper on these very same projects, including poorly considered tentative conclusions, meaningless fragmentary findings, and almost worthless status reports, is already far greater than the orderly flow of one-page summaries would be. Furthermore, distribution would be limited to fields of interest, perhaps using the outline contained in her Panel's list of projects. Purpose of notification would include reducing duplication of projects, eliminating some projects of marginal utility, and putting project workers and project

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supervisors in touch with persons working in related areas. Bernie Fry suggested that the Panel or some other review mechanism could perform these functions simply by a careful reading of the project forms. However, this would not bring about the considerable savings that might be achieved while duplicative projects were still in the thinking stage and before the form had even been prepared. Blanche Oliveri of Agriculture was startled to hear that 50 percent of projects are not reported. Agriculture has been quite meticulous about keeping its record complete. Dr. Freeman of SIE pointed out that heretofore each agency has done its own defining of projects and that SIE has, when necessary, redefined them. A more uniform reporting would certainly lead to a more retrievable file. After much quibbling about whether there was an action paper or not and who should initiate such a paper, it was agreed that Ruth Davis will discuss project notification input with the principle agencies concerned. Once she is certain that they are headed for the same goal, she will presumably draft an action paper. (Following the meeting, I asked Ruth Davis what could be done to systematize the handling of journal literature and other reporting about projects, i.e., reporting that is not done by the projects themselves. She agreed that there is no adequate mechanism at the present time and that the duplication among users is serious. She also agreed that this would be a logical extension of the project listing already done by her Panel.)

12. Mel Day reported two new undertakings by his Panel on International Information Activities. Foster Mohrhardt is a sub-committee of one to look into the need to update the Aines report on international exchange. Bill Mills of State is undertaking a draft on the information needs of underdeveloped nations. On the continuing question of domestic policy on machine-readable bibliographic data produced by the government or with government support, Mel hopes to have a draft of guidelines within a few days.

13. Ed Theriault reported for Ed Stiles. He said that the Patent Office plans to record patents on aperture cards with a 12 to 1 reduction ratio for internal Patent Office use. This format will also be used for printing hard copies for supplemental distribution. A new IBM machine will be used to reduce the 12-1 image to 24-1. The product will be a key punched MIL-D aperture card with a capacity of 8 frames per card.

14. Security representatives of DoD, AEC, and NASA have met to start discussion on standardization of classified microfiche. Bill Knox stated that since reports are substantive, the research element should have the final say rather than the security offices. There was a little murmuring at this and Mel Day drew the two considerations together by stating that this is really a decision for management and not for a subordinate level. Ed Brunenkant stated flatly that the present security system is in disharmony with new technology.

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15. A sub-panel has drafted a charter for examining non-security restrictions on technical reports. A charter has also been drafted for the Sub-panel on Standardization.

16. The standard on descriptive cataloging originally intended for discussion at this meeting will probably come up next time. Numerous written comments have been received.

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It was mentioned in passing that the Bureau of the Budget seems to be gaining some momentum for a uniform recording of dates in the following order: (1) year, (2) month, (3) day.

17. Work on depository libraries has been held up during the illness of the chairman. Someone remarked that if the President's intent is followed on charging fees for services, the depository libraries will probably disappear.

18. Walter Carlson reported that the Project LEX procedures book is now out and copies will be distributed through COSATI. He also reported that a memo was going out regarding a tighter interpretation on the release of technical information to foreign countries. The DoD interpretation is that the data on denied commodities and techniques is as denied as the denied items themselves; since release overseas could reach an unfriendly country, there should be no release overseas; and finally, since the Clearinghouse has no mechanism for sorting out requesters, much information on new technology will not be released to the Clearinghouse.

19. The Chairman announced that the next meeting will be held 66-7-20.

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Chief Reference Librarian

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25 May 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT: COSATI Meeting, 18 May 1966

1. The Chairman announced that Van Williams, who has been leading the American Institute of Physics toward improved information handling, died in London over the weekend.

2. The Chairman announced that the effort to standardize project announcement forms will include FAA, H&W, NASA, AEC, DDC, and the Clearinghouse.

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4. The President has written to departments and agencies endorsing the principle of charging fees for services rendered. This would presumably apply specifically to DDC service supplied to the Defense community. Walter Carlson pointed out that the accounting procedures of DoD would involve very high paper work expense, in some cases several times the value of the service rendered. He felt that it is essential to determine whether the charges to the user should include the bookkeeping expenses. He was told that the Office of Budget Review, Bureau of the Budget, should be questioned on this point.

5. Through the kindness of CIA, advance copies of the COSATI Inventory of Information Sciences Technology Activities of Certain U.S. Government Agencies were handed to the Chairman. I announced that bulk distribution was scheduled for Friday, 20 May 1966. Several members were uncertain as to the interpretation of the limiting statement, "For Official Use Only." When the Chairman and I indicated that this would permit use by contractors in behalf of government activities, Walter Carlson said that the DoD interpretation was very strict, namely that documents so labeled were intended for government officials only and that consultants could use them only on the days when they are in the employ of the U.S. Government. He added that this particular document is very close to being "Confidential" in the strict security sense, since it reveals quite clearly the thrust of major U.S. efforts and potential U.S. capabilities. The members were not given definitive guidance on the handling of this document, and presumably each will follow the practice of his own agency.

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6. Burt Adkinson reviewed the status of the serials inventory project. The report by Information Dynamics Corporation is a feasibility study and nothing more. Since the serials task force had been dismissed before the report was received, NSF reviewed it in behalf of COSATI, checking with other agencies and with some potential users outside of Government. The consensus was an endorsement of the general approach; an indication that many users of serials would be glad to supply input to an inventory; and the feeling that the Library of Congress was a logical location. It was agreed that attaching an inventory project to one operational group or agency would inevitably result in too narrow a base of coverage. John Sherrod noted that an earlier effort to develop a serials inventory was dropped because of the difficulty of defining what is and what is not S&T, and because a partial inventory now exists and any significant improvement would soon reach the point of diminishing returns. He added that it is illogical to talk about one segment of the literature out of context and that the real problem is to develop a far broader list of titles. When he mentioned that the U.S. is the only advanced country without a national bibliography, Quincy Mumford explained that we achieve some of the same purpose through Publishers' Weekly, the Cumulative Book Index, the National Union Catalog, the catalogs of NLM and NAL, and New Serials Titles. He pointed out that a national bibliography in the usual sense would not provide a cumulative serials listing. Dr. Mumford said that there will probably never be another Union List of Serials. He did not respond to the implied question of LC setting up a serials inventory and continuing to operate it to the tune of approximately one-third of a million dollars each year. Walter Carlson suggested that a poor man's substitute may be available through the listing provided by the National Lending Library in England. Although the NLL list contains only 24 thousand current titles, it might provide a starting point. Marty Cummings mentioned specifically that NLL lists only half the current titles in biology and medicine. When a continuing inventory is set up, Dr. Cummings and others feel that one of the major goals should be the identification of one holding library for each title listed. This would be a far cry from a true Union Catalog but it would serve many of the purposes and could be achieved at a greatly reduced cost. When Bill Knox called for volunteers to make a six months' pre-system design study, there was complete silence. He then proposed, and received agreement, that OST would attempt to assign such a study through direct negotiation.

7. The action paper on international release of tapes was approved. The preamble is not considered a part of the paper and is not intended for release to the public. It will go to the Federal Council members through their representatives on COSATI. Mel Day explained that the current practice is for tapes to be closely controlled within the receiving country. At a later date, of course, their use may become more widely spread. This action paper encourages the dissemination of information in tape form and, at the same time, follows the principle of information flow through a series of "responsible agents." Mel's panel will start

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right away on a tentative, preliminary, interim, rough draft of guidelines for domestic availability of tapes.

8. John Sherrod reported that the Panel on Education and Training is beginning to make its presence known. When Lehigh University wanted Government support in introducing new courses in the field of science information, the Panel pressured NSF to put up some money. He said that the Panel is developing a one-week refresher course, to be given during the summer. He hopes to establish COSATI fellowships by the summer of 1967, to bring ten professors and lecturers to Washington for two months' experience in governmental information handling programs. He sees a need for a Washington society of library technicians, with emphasis on formalized training at the sub-professional level. (There is a precedent in the newly established field of registered hospital technician; for many years technical assistants in British libraries have had their own organization.) He is still looking forward to a continuing survey of courses being offered throughout the country. The Labor Department is sponsoring a manpower inventory in this field. (Since no one else at the meeting was familiar with the new Civil Service Commission standards, I phoned the citation to John Sherrod after the meeting.)

9. Ed Stiles announced that he has an ad hoc group working on perspective, or what he calls the topology of national networks with full consideration of their multi-dimensional aspects. He expects this to help in determining which projects deserve priority. In response to some doubts around the table, he stated that he felt that he would build on, rather than conflict with, the activities of the Panel on Information Sciences Technology.

10. Ed Stiles said that his Sub-panel on Microfiche Standards is now looking into the feasibility of standardizing classified microfiches. This is a significant problem in AEC, DoD, and NASA. At present, there is little uniformity in practice. For example, procedures for downgrading classified reports need to be developed. The Patent Office is planning a large-scale microfiche program that is not compatible with the COSATI standard. Ed Brunenkant, former Chairman of the Ad Hoc Microfiche Committee, felt that the sub-panel should review all exceptions to the COSATI standard to see if they are justified.

11. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 14 June 1966.

12. (After the meeting, Mel Day repeated his willingness to brief a group from CIA at any time on NASA's [redacted] However, he said that it will be three or four weeks before it's fully operational.)

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24 May 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT: COSATI Meeting, 26 April 1966

1. The Chairman announced that Don Schon, the official Commerce Department member, leaves 1 July 1966. Bernie Fry becomes the full member, with Dick Spencer of the Patent Office as his alternate. [] of NSA has replaced Bud Moyer of DDC as Executive Secretary of the Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems. 25X1

2. Bill Knox reported on a meeting he attended in London of the OECD Ad Hoc Group on National Information Policies. The SDC report was a main topic of discussion and was very well received. The United States is so far ahead of most countries in this kind of planning that there is really no comparison. Some OECD members are reviewing the role of the European Translation Center. Originally the Dutch put up all of the money and they still provide 70 percent. Most of the users are Dutch or German. Participation by other countries is sporadic and suffers from inertia, inefficiency, and local pride. The ETC was referred to as "a sick and dying activity." One of the silliest attitudes was: "Since we can't be complete, why try to be prompt." At best the Center serves to prevent duplication of translations. There is no coordinated mechanism for providing copies of translations already completed. Some foreign language materials that are difficult to obtain do find their way into an OECD country and get cited in the European Translation Center. Walter Carlson understands that there is a good deal of Russian language material not easily available elsewhere. Bernie Fry added that OECD provides the best access to East German Russian material. As incidental intelligence, it was mentioned that UNESCO has just set up a Spanish language center in Argentina.

3. Dr. Hornig endorses the government-wide use of a project report form similar to the one now used by DoD and NASA. Bill Knox said bluntly that there is no alternative to a central project register. This must be a neutral, non-operating reference point for use by the government and the general public. Bill Knox is considering setting up an ad hoc group of project managers in various agencies to make recommendations for Federal Council consideration.

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4. Several problems remain regarding the National Standard Reference Data System. Pending legislation is not clear on the sale of privately generated data. Also, the apparently authoritative reliability of data supplied through NSRDS might have unfortunate legal repercussions if use of the data resulted in physical injury or financial loss. Dr. Astin feels so strongly about the importance of this program that he might even be willing to give up control of it if the Department of Commerce cannot get sufficient funds to operate it. Walter Carlson said that Defense would vigorously resist moving the NSRD Center out of Commerce.

5. The data which member agencies supply to NSF should include expenditures for COSATI and other cooperative efforts. This additional data will not appear in Federal funds for R&D.

6. The Task Group on National Systems

(a) a survey of abstracting and indexing services in the U.S. being compiled by SDC and due this fall; (b) an ARPA funded study on data handling with emphasis on definition and quantification of reliability data; and (c) a definition of informal data transfer both for current awareness and for answering specific questions. This might be funded by ARPA or SATCOM. [redacted] also discussed OST steps to implement Federal Council decisions. Staffing within OST is a delicate matter. Already, with the arrival of Curtis Fritz from State, four people are working on information handling, and this is the largest staff within OST. One solution is to ask NSF to assist in the development of national plans and programs. Other possibilities are the temporary augmentation of OST staff and the use of outside contractors. As an example of how this works in practice, Bill Knox thanked the Library of Congress for Barbara Markuson, and NSA for providing [redacted]

7. The Panel on International Information Activities has been discussing an action paper, "A Policy for International Use of U.S. Government Machine-Readable Information." This will be renamed "Interim" and will be redrafted to meet various Defense considerations of substance and editing. (The undersigned also submitted several editorial changes to eliminate ambiguities in the original draft.)

8. Mel Day also discussed his own paper on exchange of nuclear energy data with European countries. In general, it was felt that more good than harm results from wider dissemination of information that can be released. The flow of information through EURATOM appears to be effective. Ed Brunenkant looks forward to the day when AEC will be able to exchange tapes and documents with regional or national atomic information clearing houses. The EURATOM channel might some day serve as a funnel to and from the USSR, or the AEC might go direct. About 50 thousand items a year are now involved and this figure could triple. Domestic distribution might put quite a burden on the Clearinghouse.

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9. Ed Stiles asked for comments on the "Revision of Standards for Descriptive Cataloging of Government S&T Reports." The chief change is in the handling of corporate authors. Mel Day felt that there was not sufficient indication of the consequence to the agencies of adopting this paper. Bill Knox emphasized his policy that all panel chairmen have the authority to communicate internally in COSATI and externally with outside groups to obtain new views and comments on matters at issue. He asked that the action paper be made ready for discussion at the June meeting. As an interim step, it was agreed that the earlier published Standard for Descriptive Cataloging be declared out-of-print and unavailable.

10. Bill Knox is planning a presentation to PSAC on information services of the Federal Government.

11. Walter Carlson announced that Jack Stearns of the National Referral Center at LC has joined his staff at DoD. He also said that for the time being, the setting up of the file on R&D in progress has priority over the handling of research reports.


✓ Chief Reference Librarian

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